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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/977,746	10/15/2001	David Llewellyn Mallis	09432.183002	3552
22511	7590	06/10/2004	EXAMINER	
OSHA & MAY L.L.P. 1221 MCKINNEY STREET HOUSTON, TX 77010			NICHOLSON, ERIC K	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		3679		

DATE MAILED: 06/10/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/977,746	MALLIS ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Eric K Nicholson	3679

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
  - If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
  - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
  - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 March 2004.
- 2a) This action is FINAL.                    2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                    | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.   |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____. | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
|   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____.                                   |

**DETAILED ACTION**

**Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102**

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. § 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 10,11,15,16,17 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. patent 5,462315 to Klementich. The Klementich patent illustrates, for example in figs. 4A-4C and column 21, lines 5-22, a method of coupling threads pipes which includes rotationally engaging a pin member 402 and a box member 406, the pin member 402 having an external thread 416 increasing in width in one direction, the external thread 416 comprising load and stab flanks, the box member 406 having an internal thread 428 increasing in width in the other

direction, the internal thread 428 comprising load and stab flanks, the pin member and box member defining a positive stop torque shoulder 408,419 wherein the widths of the external thread and the internal thread are selected such that upon final makeup (column 21, lines 5-6 and line 18) of the connection a selected clearance (column 21, lines 20-21) exists between the external thread and internal thread. As to claim 11, see the positive stop torque shoulder 408 disposed at an interface of a box face disposed on the box member and a pin outer diameter shoulder 419 disposed on the pin member. As to claim 15, the two-step configuration (fig. 4C) of the internal thread of the box member and the two-step configuration (fig. 4B) of the external thread of the pin member and the positive stop torque shoulder 408,419 disposed at an interface between the two steps of the pin and box members. As to claim 16 see column 22, lines 50-51 wherein the internal and external threads are adapted to form a metal-to-metal seal. As to claims 17 and 18 see figures 6A,6B and 8B which illustrate a tapered, internal, generally dovetail-shaped thread having stab flanks, load flanks, roots, and crests of the box and pin members.

**Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103**

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 6,174,001 to Enderle in view of U.S. patent 4,822,081 to Blose. Enderle discloses the claimed device of a threaded pipe connection including a pin member 111 having an external thread increasing in width in one direction, the external thread comprising load and stab flanks and a box member 112 having an internal thread increasing in width in the other direction so that complementary internal and external threads move into engagement upon make-up of the connection, the internal thread comprising load and stab flanks and wherein the width of the internal thread and external thread are selected to provide a selected

clearance (column 2, lines 35-50) at least between the internal load and stab flanks and the external load and stab flanks upon final makeup of the connection. However Enderle does not disclose using a positive stop shoulder either between the stepped threads or at either end of the box and pin members. Blose discloses that it is known in the art to provide a similar type coupling with a positive torque shoulder at 41/42, 43,44 or between the threads as disclosed in column 5, lines 25-30. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the threaded box and pin members of Enderle with positive torque stop shoulders either at the ends or in between the threaded steps as taught by Blose in order to provide a more secure coupling for the threaded members due to the shoulders assisting the stab flanks of the threaded members in resisting applied axial compressive loads.

### **Conclusion**

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-18 have been considered but are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Eric Nicholson whose telephone number is (703) 308-0829. The examiner can normally be reached on Tuesdays thru Fridays from 7:30 to 6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola, can be reached on (703) 308-2686. The fax phone number for Technology Center 3600 is (703) 872-9306.

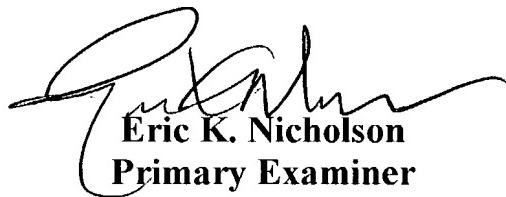
Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Technology Center receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR.

Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll free).

ekn

5/28/04



Eric K. Nicholson  
Primary Examiner  
Technology Center 3600